

Appl. No. 09/832,631
Amdt.AF dated May 24, 2006
Reply to Final Office Action of February 28, 2006

REMARKS

Applicants have received and carefully reviewed the Final Office Action mailed on February 28, 2006. Claims 1-60, 63 and 64 remain pending, with claims 1, 2, 9, 11, 13-16, 18, 19, 29, 30, 35, 37-40, 42 and 43 rejected, claims 8, 10, 12, 17, 20-28, 36, 41, 44-52 and 54-60 withdrawn from consideration, claim 53 allowed, and claims 3-7, 31-34, 63 and 64 objected to. With this Amendment, claims 54-60 have been cancelled, and claims 1 and 29 have been amended to incorporate former claims 63 and 64, which were objected to as being dependent upon rejected base claims, but otherwise allowable. Reconsideration of the remaining claims, examination of the withdrawn claims, and allowance of all pending claims are respectfully requested.

In the Final Office Action, various rejections of the pending claims were stated, including rejections of independent claims 1 and 29. The Examiner indicated in paragraph 16 of the Final Office Action that claims 63 and 64 were objected to as being dependent upon rejected base claims, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all the limitations of the base claim.

Though Applicants respectfully disagree with the rejections, in order to advance prosecution, Applicants have amended independent claim 1 to incorporate former claim 63, and independent claim 29 to incorporate former claim 64. Because claims 1 and 29, as amended, are substantially the same as previously pending claims 63 and 64, respectively, it is believed that this amendment does not create any new issues requiring additional search, and is therefore appropriate for entry after the Final Office Action. Therefore, it is believed that claims 1 and 29 are now in condition for allowance.

As per the Examiner's indication of the allowability of claims 63 and 64, all pending rejections are rendered moot by these amendments. It is believed that claims 1 and 29, along with dependent claims 2-7, 9, 11, 13-16, 18, 19, 30-35, 37-40, 42 and 43 are in condition for allowance.

Applicants also respectfully request consideration and allowance of withdrawn dependent claims 8, 10, 12, 17, 20-28, 36, 41 and 44-52, as the base claims (claims 1 and 29) that are generic thereover are in condition for allowance.

Applicants thank the Examiner for indicating the allowability of claim 53.

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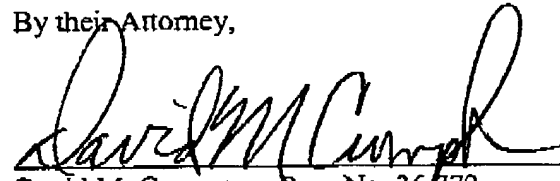
Reexamination and reconsideration are respectfully requested. It is respectfully submitted that all pending claims are now in condition for allowance. Issuance of a Notice of Allowance in due course is requested. If a telephone conference might be of assistance, please contact the undersigned attorney at (612) 677-9050.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert K. Rowe et al.

By their Attorney,

Date: 5/24/06



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